

A PUBLIC MEETING OF THE BRISTOL COUNTY ADVISORY BOARD

Thursday, February 8, 2018

Keith Hall, Bristol County Agricultural High School

84 Center Street, Dighton, Massachusetts

A Public Meeting of the Bristol County Advisory Board commenced at 6:04 PM on Thursday February 8, 2018 in Keith Hall at the Bristol County Agricultural High School in Dighton Massachusetts.

Notice of this meeting was issued to all members of the Advisory Board, posted on the County website, in the County Courthouses, sent to the City and Town Halls in Bristol County and legally advertised in the Taunton Daily Gazette.

Prior to the commencement of the meeting Selectman Joseph Pacheco, as Acting Chairperson of the Executive Board, asked all to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll call was taken by Maria V. Gomes, County Administrator, and **Fifteen** out of **Twenty** communities were present for a total of **65.11** percent of the votes out of a total of 100.00.

City or Town	Representative	Vote
Acushnet	Kevin Gaspar Sr.	1.91
Attleboro	Paul Heroux	7.35
Berkley	Gilbert J. Pontes III	1.34
Dartmouth	John Haran	9.44
Dighton	Nancy J. Goulart	1.55
Easton	Dottie Fulginiti	5.77
Fairhaven	Robert J. Espindola	3.48
Freetown	Robert Jose	2.21
Mansfield	Jess Aptowitz	6.07
Raynham	Joseph Pacheco	3.48
Rehoboth	Frederick Vadnais	3.04
Seekonk	Michelle Hines	3.86
Somerset	David Berube	3.63
Swansea	Steve Kitchin	3.65
Taunton	David Pottier	8.33
TOTAL:		65.11

The following communities were absent from the meeting: Fall River, North Attleboro, New Bedford, Norton and Westport.

Acting Chairman Pacheco thanked everyone in attendance for what he stated was the third meeting called to discuss the Bristol County Agricultural High School project and apologized for being redundant in the proceedings. As a result of a question regarding the validity of one of the representatives at the last meeting held on January 6th, it was decided to call this meeting.

Reorganization of the Executive Board was the next item on the agenda due to the recent election defeat of Mayor Kevin Dumas in Attleboro who served as the Chairman of the Bristol County Executive Board for several years.

Upon motion of Berkley Selectman Gilbert J. Pontes III, seconded by Mansfield Selectman Jess Aptowitz, it was unanimously voted to appoint Raynham Selectman Joseph R. Pacheco as Chairman and Dighton Selectwoman Nancy Goulart as Clerk of the Bristol County Executive Board.

Upon motion of Dighton Selectwoman Goulart, seconded by Taunton City Councilor Pottier, it was unanimously voted to appoint Berkley Selectman Gilbert J. Pontes III as the Executive Member of the Bristol County Advisory Board.

Chairman Pacheco introduced the following:

County Commissioners Chairman Paul Kitchen, John Mitchell and John Saunders.

County Administrator Maria Gomes

School Superintendent Adele Sands and former Superintendent Stephen Dempsey.

Selectwoman Hines from the Town of Seekonk asked for an overview of the project since she was in attendance for the first time.

Chairman Pacheco turned the question over to Paul Kitchen. Commissioner Kitchen who is the chairperson of the BCAHS building committee explained the buildout and renovation project and the steps that would be taken. He reviewed, in summary, the renovation and construction project phases.

Commissioner Kitchen explained that the County cannot borrow without special legislation. With the Bristol County Advisory Board vote of approval for the project to be bonded for \$103,750,000 million up to a period of 30 years, special legislation filing could move forward. Debt would be paid on a per pupil expenditure which includes minimum contribution, debt and transportation. There is no regional agreement for the County so therefore the special legislation will determine how that debt for the County will be paid. As recommended by the Project Manager, in order to have the project go out to bid, the County would need \$8 million dollars for the first year. Based on the MSBA reimbursement rate, the County would BAN for a period of three years. In the upcoming assessment received from Bristol Aggie, in addition to the tuition amount which is now approximately \$2,117, plus the cost of the BAN of \$4 million for three years. The BAN is approximately \$3,155 per student which will be assessed this year. The amount for the assessment would be put in this year's town meeting articles for each community for the upcoming fiscal year.

Selectwoman Hines asked what would happen if town meeting does not approve the assessment. It was unclear as to what would happen if that occurred but it was the belief that the students from any community that failed to pay the assessment would no longer be allowed to attend the school. If that were to happen, everyone else's assessment would need to be adjusted to account for the withdrawal of those students and the funds.

Selectman Aptowitz asked if the Advisory Board members could be provided with an attendance list from the last few meetings that involve this vote. Commissioners Mitchell stated that the larger communities, including Fall River, are informed and aware of the meetings.

Selectman Gaspar from Acushnet had concerns of the assessment number changing down the road if communities backed out of the school. He also was concerned about the reimbursement rate from the MSBA and

whether or not that will change. He stated that it should be mandatory for a representative from each community to be present.

Architect Bobby William from HMFH confirmed that the MSBA has committed to the reimbursement number for the BCAHS project.

Chairman Pacheco explained that the way county government is comprised, it is not possible to mandate all communities to be at the meeting. There was a great deal of notification and personal outreach conducted by the Administration and members of the Advisory Board, reaching out to other communities to get them to participate.

Selectwoman Goulart added that there are out of district students who attend BCAHS and there is quite a large waiting list. So, if there were to be a loss of students from one community, the waiting list could be addressed. The school buildout will also allow for more enrollment. Commissioner Kitchen mentioned that there are currently 67 out of county students attending the school.

Selectwoman Goulart added that if a student wants a specific vocational education that is not offered in their own community, specifically under MGL Chapter 74, that student has the right to choose a vocational program and their community must pay the tuition and transportation for that student to attend that school.

Selectwoman Fulginiti from Easton asked about the legislation that was mentioned by Representative Haddad at the meeting on January 6th. Ken Raymond explained that the House and Senate have now filed the same capital bonding bill but it would be up to the Administration to approve that Bill and to decide whether or not to spend that money. In this case the bond bill is for up to \$30 million dollars.

Selectman Jose from Freetown asked about the student projection numbers. Commissioner Kitchen stated that the current waiting list is about 200 students. As the project is completed, the school's ultimate goal is to grow class size to reach an enrollment of approximately 600-650 students. On average the school is turning down approximately 60 students per year.

Cities and towns will be billed on their per pupil enrollment based on the October 1 report each community sends to the state.

Selectman Steve Kitchin from Swansea asked about the retention rate. Principal Braga responded that 1-2 students leave per year. Superintendent Sands added that that was mostly due to them not being able to get into the program they wanted.

Additional staffing would be required as the student population grows. Currently, there are 39 teachers on staff.

Upon motion of Freetown Selectman Jose, seconded by Taunton Councilor Pottier, it was unanimously voted to call for the vote.

A motion was made by Berkley Selectman Pontes and seconded by Dighton Selectwoman Goulart to approve the Bristol County Agricultural High School Project with a focus on Option C, to be bonded up to an amount of \$103,750,000.00 for a term of up to 30 years.

On the motion, by Roll Call Vote:

Acushnet	yes	1.91
Attleboro	yes	7.35
Berkley	yes	1.34

Dartmouth	yes	9.44	
Dighton	yes	1.55	
Easton	yes	5.77	
Fairhaven	yes	3.48	
Freetown	no	2.21	
Mansfield	yes	6.07	
Raynham	yes	3.48	
Rehoboth	yes	3.04	
Seekonk	no	3.86	
Somerset	yes	3.63	
Swansea	yes	3.65	
Taunton	yes	8.33	
TOTAL		59.04 % Approval-Yes	
		6.07% No	

Motion carries with 59.04 % voting in favor.

A motion was made by Dighton Selectwoman Goulart, seconded by Berkley Selectman Pontes to approve the minutes of November 30, 2017 and the minutes of January 6, 2018. The motion was approved with the towns of Seekonk, Swansea and Fairhaven abstaining.

Chairman Pacheco noted for the record that there was some correspondence from the City of New Bedford on file and if anyone would like a copy of that correspondence copies were available.

Board of Trustees President Ken Raymond thanked the Advisory Board on behalf of the Board of Trustees. He added that future event invitations that will be held at the school would be sent out to the communities in the County.

Chairman Pacheco thanked everyone for attending.

Dighton Selectwoman Goulart, on behalf of the Dighton Board of Selectmen wanted to thank Dighton colleagues and residents who were present in support of this project.

A motion was made by Mansfield Selectman Aptowitz, seconded by Taunton City Councilor Pottier to adjourn at 6:47 PM.

Approved:

Chairman

Date